

UNCLASSIFIED

K404

ACTION WHA-00

RELEASED IN FULL

INFO	LOG-00	AMAD-00	A-00	CA-00	INL-00	PDI-00	DS-00
	EAP-00	EUR-00	UTED-00	VCI-00	TEDE-00	INR-00	IO-00
	L-00	VCIE-00	DCP-00	OIC-00	OIG-00	OMB-00	NIMA-00
	PA-00	GIWI-00	DOHS-00	IRM-00	NCTC-00	BBG-00	R-00
	ECA-00	IIP-00	DSCC-00	G-00	SAS-00	FA-00	DHSE-00
	/000W						

-----787756 051540Z /38

O 051542Z FEB 07
FM AMEMBASSY OTTAWA
TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 4914
INFO CIA WASHDC
DEPT OF TREASURY WASHDC
USDOC WASHDC
DIA WASHDC
SECDEF WASHDC
USNMR SHAPE BE
WHITE HOUSE WASHDC
ALL CANADIAN POSTS COLLECTIVE

UNCLAS OTTAWA 000195

STATE FOR WHA/CAN, WHA/PDA
WHITE HOUSE PASS NSC/WEUROPE; NCS/WHA

E.O. 12958: N/A
TAGS: KPAO, KMDR, OIIP, OPRC, CA

SUBJECT: MEDIA REACTION: SOUTH AND CENTRAL ASIA; GLOBAL WAR AGAINST
TERROR

SOUTH AND CENTRL ASIA

1. "How the Iraq crisis has emboldened Iran"
The leading Globe and Mail opined (2/2): "The U.S. political and military strategy in Iraq may have been an abject failure so far, but it could not be working out better for the policy makers sitting in Tehran. With a weakened, fragmented neighbour - and traditional rival - sliding headlong into civil war, Iran is poised to extend its malicious influence in the Persian Gulf region and threaten vital Western interests. If it also manages to develop a nuclear capacity in aid of its expansionist ambitions, it could well trigger a dangerous arms race as Saudi Arabia, Egypt and other Arab states sought to reduce their vulnerability. The Bush administration, which has only itself to blame for this state of affairs, has been arguing for years that Iran's theocrats pose a huge risk to the fragile stability in the region; and officials have sought to produce persuasive evidence.... Some critics fear that confronting Iranian aggression will only lead to retaliation, which could possibly

UNCLASSIFIED

escalate into full-scale war. Tehran has already made it known that it would cut off oil shipments through the vital Strait of Hormuz, a nightmare scenario for Arab producers and their major Western customers. How is Washington to best respond to the threat? A new study by the Brookings Institution urges it to draw 'red lines' for Iran, which, if crossed, would provoke a tough economic, political or military response. The punishable violations would include sending Iranian military units across the border, laying claim to Iraqi territory and inciting secessionists. The think tank also urges that the United States not take sides if all-out civil war breaks out in Iraq and that it transfer its troops to the country's borders to guard against further meddling and protect vulnerable refugees. Washington is said to be considering stepping up air patrols of the border, but it should be moving soldiers in large numbers there now. This time, unfortunately, the United States is not crying wolf."

2. "A repeat of 2002-2003"

Under the sub-heading 'For a few weeks, the Bush administration has been distilling alarming news about the 'demonic' character of Iran,' Jocelyn Coulon, director of the 'Rseau francophone de recherche sur les operations de paix' (Francophone peace operations think tank) affiliated with the University of Montreal's Study and Research Group on International Security wrote in the centrist La

Presse (2/1): "There is a sense of dj`vu in Washington these days. Four years ago, public opinion was galvanized to believe in the threat posed by the toothless Baghdad dictator.... A good disinformation campaign turned the tides. Everyone had a role to play. The Secretary of Homeland Security...illustrated the terrorist threat the U.S. was faced with. At the same time, 'deep throats' at the Pentagon and the White House spoke to supportive journalists of terrible threats coming from Iraq.... 'Breaking News' items appeared on screen [during prime time] like so many kernels of corn bursting in a popcorn machine and support for the war was on the rise. At the end of the day, journalists would run to the White House to get the Presidential reaction, already prepared: 'I am troubled by these new revelations' Bush would say, without laughing. Today, the 2002-2003 Qrevelations' Bush would say, without laughing. Today, the 2002-2003 scenario is being repeated. Iran and, to a lesser degree, Syria are in the line of fire. Why? For two reasons. The first has to do with present contingencies. The situation in the Middle East is bad and there needs to be a guilty party against whom to strike to take attention away from the failure of U.S. policy in the region.... The second reason...is long term. The Bush administration is still hoping for a remodeling of the Middle East to avoid another 9/11.... Following the attacks on New York and Washington 'we needed to be bold and take war where our enemies are,' said [Condoleezza Rice]. Iraq was the lab rat of this new policy. But faced with the bloody disaster of this venture, we thought that cool heads would prevail

UNCLASSIFIED

UNCLASSIFIED

over nutcase ideologues in Washington. That is not the case. War and chaos will be taken to where the 'enemy' is.... In this bloody card game, all bets are not off. American public opinion is no longer behind the President and propaganda 'Breaking News' items are likely to fall flat. But the President has vowed not to let Iranians have the bomb before the end of his mandate. Ladies and gentlemen, place your bets."

GLOBAL WAR AGAINST TERROR

3. "The German Maher Arar"

Editorialist Serge Truffaut wrote in the liberal Le Devoir (2/1):
"...Even if the action...is mostly symbolic - back in the U.S., the CIA agents will obviously not be extradited - it will still probably cause embarrassment to the Bush administration.... Having regained majority in the Congress...Democrats rushed to set up a work schedule which obviously includes inquiries into the el-Masri and

Arar cases, among others. Among the objectives, we note the most delicate: what judicial contortions did the current U.S. Attorney General do to be able to support actions that many lawyers consider to be against the law?.... This issue is also embarrassing for Bush since discontent at the CIA is on the rise along with the number of arrest warrants.... CIA agents are fed up with politicians outdoing themselves to elude justice while they, the agents, are going to court to answer for actions commanded by the former. In fact, they are campaigning for a better defined legal framework. In Italy, elected officials are worried about the collaboration between Italian and American services under Silvio Berlusconi.... The 31 arrest warrants involved CIA agents as well as their Roman intelligence counterparts.... The aim is to underline the boundless support ordered by elected officials to their agents in the realization of operations today considered suspicious. And in Germany, worries are almost identical.... The days of the policy of impunity desired by Bush and imposed to some of his European allies seems finally to be numbered."

WILKINS

NNNN

UNCLASSIFIED